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De La Rue and HR.net article

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PROFILE

Organisation: **De La Rue plc.**
 Interviewee: **Warren Kennedy.**
 Job Title: **Senior HR Manager.**
 The Subject: **De La Rue has conquered data migration problems to install a new global HR system that provides a unified view of its workforce, empowers employees, and has changed the business view of HR.**

Q: WHY WERE YOU LOOKING FOR A NEW HR SOLUTION?

A: De La Rue is a multinational organisation operating in 31 countries and employing over 6,000 employees. In the UK and globally we had a variety of HR applications and our aim was to consolidate onto a single system and provide one central database for the worldwide workforce.

This would allow us to fully automate and enhance our HR processes, procedures and administration as well as being able to deliver company-wide reporting and provide management with timely and up-to-date information.

In addition, we wanted to improve employee communications across the group through the deployment of portals to provide both group and local information. We also expected to realise efficiency savings by automating administration processes by introducing self-service capabilities to provide round-the-clock HR services. This in turn would allow HR personnel to focus on more strategic work.

Q: HOW DID YOU GO ABOUT CHOOSING A NEW SYSTEM?

A: We issued an RFP (request for proposal) and evaluated the responses from a number of established vendors. In the end

we selected HR.net from Vizual Business Tools. At the time this was a bit of a risk as the product was very new but as we had previous experience of using their earlier products, we felt confident in the quality of their software.

Our business has a lot of variation due to the markets and the different business lines we operate in, so what we particularly liked about the Vizual product was the design flexibility it provided us. The software from some other leading vendors tended to have very rigid business rules that forced you to do things in the way they wanted you to.

The core of HR.net is simply an SQL database and the interaction with the data is solely driven by developing workflows.

You have complete control of your system design, as you use the workflow engine to create

your required business processes and decide on how you store and retrieve the data.

Q: HOW DID YOU PROCEED WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION AND TRAIN THE USERS?

A: The software was first installed in the UK and we worked closely with Vizual to customise the product to De La Rue's requirements and develop the HR processes.

There was an initial problem in that the standard method of migrating data was long and laborious and we didn't feel that we had full control of the process. We fed this back to Vizual and they developed a new import tool that allowed us to load data directly from a spreadsheet.

This was a great improvement and is now a standard part of the product.

We provided a three-day training course and typically trained the HR professionals

from each country; however, for smaller sites we trained someone in finance or administration.

One of the things we particularly like about the system is that the interface is simple and intuitive and so doesn't take HR users or employees very long to learn how to use it. In addition, once someone has been trained, it is very straightforward for them to make changes to a workflow or screen layout to meet their exact requirements.

Since the initial training, we have moved away from bringing key users to the UK to providing web-based training. We can share a view of the training portal with local users so they can be kept up-to-date with new developments or trained on how to use the system.

We went methodically from country to country from September 2006 to March 2007, by which time we had all 6,000 employees on the system and completed all the training.

Q: WHAT BENEFITS HAVE YOU SEEN FROM THE NEW SYSTEM?

A: There have been a number of significant benefits both for the HR department and the company in general. One which demonstrates the flexibility of the system has been the implementation of the

COMPANY FILE

De La Rue is the world's largest commercial security printer and paper maker, involved in the production of over 150 national currencies and a range of security documents such as passports, fiscal stamps and authentication labels.

A member of the FTSE 250, De La Rue is also a leading provider of cash-handling equipment and software solutions to banks and retailers worldwide, helping them to reduce the cost of handling cash. It offers experience in banknote paper production, banknote design and printing.

De La Rue has over 6,000 staff in 31 countries.

company-wide employee suggestion programme called My Contribution .

De La Rue is very keen for employees at every level to get involved in identifying productivity improvements and staff can input suggestions via HR.net. These ideas are evaluated and the most promising ones go forward to become a project that the employee can participate in.

My Contribution has now become a strong part of the De La Rue culture, driving productivity improvements and producing significant cost savings. Each stage of the process can be tracked through HR.net.

Ad hoc reporting has also been one of the biggest advantages from the system. Previously it was a lengthy process to provide global reports and there was always a question about their accuracy. Now if a request comes from the operating board for a consolidated report, it can produce it in less than a day from real-time information, thus allowing better-informed decisions to be made.

Q: HAS THE NEW SYSTEM ALLOWED THE HR DEPARTMENT TO CHANGE ITS ROLE IN THE ORGANISATION?

A: HR as a function is moving closer to the business and we are now perceived differently. It has allowed the business to partner with HR in more important areas, such as talent management and leadership development.

These areas can be focused on by the HR business partners as the administrative work they were previously involved in has been replaced by the self-service facilities provided by the system.

It allows HR business partners to focus on what adds the most value to the business and drive their people programmes to achieve better outcomes for the organisation.

Some of the work the corporation is doing globally in terms of leadership and

PERSONAL FILE

NAME: Warren Kennedy.

BACKGROUND: Warren is a senior HR manager at De La Rue plc. He joined the company in 2002 as its HR director for North America and as part of that role managed the HRIS in the US. In 2005, he transferred to the UK for an extended expatriate assignment to lead the HR shared services team at group head office, co-ordinating global HR practices.



One key area in HR shared services is the management of the global HRIS HR.net. Warren co-ordinates the project roadmap for HR.net to align business objectives with HR processes, working with other group functions such as IS, legal, finance and procurement.

He is a certified Professional in Human Resources (PHR) from the Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM) in the US. He has a degree in computer information systems from Chapman University in California and an MBA in management from the Dallas Baptist University, Texas.

changing its culture is right at the core of what HR does. Having a global system like HR.net has helped us partner with the businesses to drive our culture, productivity and our relationships with our stakeholders to the next level.

Q: HAVE YOU INTEGRATED THE HR SYSTEM WITH OTHER KEY SYSTEMS?

A: Being able to integrate with other systems is very important for us. As we operate in so many countries, linking to the local payroll systems is a key requirement that will allow us to reduce administrative burden.

The UK used to have several different payroll systems and these have now been consolidated into one application which allows us to link it to the HR system so that changes can be automatically fed into the payroll system.

We are also working with our IS (information systems) team to do the same with Active Directory so that we can maintain parity of information between Microsoft Outlook and HR.net. We have now built a much better working relationship with IS to the extent that the global IS groups are considering ways to connect to the HR system in order to

deliver better services.

Provision of data to other areas is mainly being achieved through our self-service portal. For example, if a department needs to keep records of their ongoing training, then we work with them to collect that information in their online employee training records through a self-service portal. This allows employees to keep the information updated themselves.

We have not made the decision to connect to our finance systems yet but we are heading down this road and working more closely with finance on issues such as bonus payments and headcount reporting.

Q: HOW WILL YOU DEVELOP THE SYSTEM IN THE FUTURE?

A: We are undertaking project work all the time, as and when the businesses request it. We have a development site that allows us to rapidly create new workflows; some of this we do ourselves but due to resource constraints we also outsource work to Vizual.

Our immediate plans are to review the services we are providing to two of our largest operations in the US and Malta. In particular, we plan to link

more payroll systems to HR.net.

A typical example is the development of our company car programme. This is outsourced to a leasing company and as they need to be kept up-to-date with employee changes, then the HR system sends them the appropriate information via email. They in turn communicate back so that we can keep the two systems synchronised.

This has had a very beneficial effect on our fleet management and has avoided the need for us to employ a fleet manager.

We have had such a good experience with this that we are now looking to take the model out to our European and global fleet management.

This will also enable us to leverage our purchasing power with the car companies so that even our smaller operations can benefit.

As the management process will be automated then they will not have to take on company car administration.

Q: WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO OTHER ORGANISATIONS CONSIDERING A NEW HR SOLUTION?

A: To maximise the value you get from a new system you have to ensure that your business processes are correct. These should be reviewed to make certain they are exactly what you want before attempting to automate them. Otherwise what you are going to automate will be inefficient and not deliver all the results you are seeking.

You also need to decide how much flexibility you require from your system. If your sites and operations are very similar, then you can implement a system that enforces strong business rules across all locations.

However, if you have a variety of business rules then you need to ensure that your system is flexible enough to accommodate this and that it can be easily modified as your requirements alter.

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